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DRAFT

Advice-giving in newspaper weather commentaries

Abstract

Receiving accurate and timely advice about extreme weather events can impact a person's likelihood to survive, cope with and minimise exposure. Advice-giving seems to be a common interpersonal strategy in weather commentaries in many Chinese newspapers, yet research into weather advice-giving is greatly lacking. This study investigated whether the discourse of advice-giving in newspaper weather commentaries differed depending on the newspaper source and/or on the weather reported. We focused on two popular metropolitan newspapers: *Beijing Morning Post* and *Beijing Evening News*. Forty texts from each source were chosen (20 for ordinary weather and 20 for extreme weather). Results showed that the advice given stems from a vast reservoir of advice themes, and we found clear differences depending on weather, with significantly more advice given during extreme events. We also found that *Beijing Evening News*, in general, provided more advice in their weather commentaries. Finally, writers who were prone to take an authoritative stance tended to increase their use of imperatives and "high-status" vocatives during extreme weather, whereas those who positioned themselves "with" their readers also used more imperatives, but did not change their vocative preferences.

Key words

Advice-giving, written discourse, weather commentary, extreme weather event, interpersonal strategy

1. Introduction

1.1 Background

Following the SARS (Severe Acute Respiratory Syndrome) outbreak in 2003 and an increasing string of extreme weather events, the People's Republic of China Emergency Response Law was adopted in 2007, and in 2008 the weather emergency management system established new protocols for weather monitoring, warning and information sharing (Yang and Mao, 2012). Importantly, the China Meteorological Administration developed an information sharing mechanism that also includes the Xinhua News Agency, the Ministry of Industry and Information Technology, and the State Administration of Radio Film and Television. Thus, full use of newspapers, radio and television, as well as new media outlets, has become a vital part of Chinese disaster communication (Yang and Mao, 2012).

Weather information has been an important resource utilised by Chinese newspapers to attract readers ever since their first appearance in China in 1882 (Ye and Chen, 2011). To meet the needs from agriculture, industries, commercial businesses, and the general public, some newspapers even dedicate an entire colourful page to weather information. It has been argued that weather forecasts are very low in informativity because of their tightly constrained format, topic, situation and medium (de Beaugrande, 1997). However, weather commentaries seem to vary greatly between countries. So while de Beaugrande's statement might be true for some cultures, it does not apply to Chinese weather commentaries, which are not

limited to rigid formulaic forecasts about temperature, wind and rain. (Examples of commentaries are available in Section 2.2.)

In China, weather commentaries can contain reviews of past weather (e.g. *It was a scorching hot day yesterday*), forecasts (e.g. *It is going to rain today*), as well as advice on how to accommodate the forecasted weather (e.g. *Don't forget your umbrella*). Thus, advice on health related precautions, risk and safety, recommended actions and activities, and general health-care are typical parts of Chinese weather commentaries. The advice provided is widely recognised as valuable information and as an appreciated tool in everyday life (e.g. Liu, 2011; Ye and Chen, 2011). In Chinese culture, advice-giving is generally viewed positively as an expression of friendly concern (Hinkel, 1997). Furthermore, in Chinese society, perhaps unlike many other cultures, there are presumed and reinforced direct links between weather and health. With time, the availability of weather advice in top national and local newspapers seems to have contributed to a culture even more attuned to this link; in fact, present-day thoughts about the impact of climate change on human health are increasingly incorporated into these weather commentaries.

This paper seeks to address whether the amount of advice provided in Chinese newspapers and the discourse utilised differ depending on type of newspaper and the severity of the weather.

1.2 Advice and Advice-giving

While research on advice-giving in weather commentaries is greatly lacking, abundant relevant work has been done on advice-giving in a variety of discourse settings. This section will briefly review these settings, but first we will define the meaning of *advice*.

There is no agreement on a clear definition of *advice* in discourse analysis (DeCapua and Huber, 1995; Vine, 2004), but we can distinguish between a micro-structural level and a macro-structural level. At the micro-level, following Searle's (1969) tradition, advice is seen as "a directive or a recommendation toward a course of action that the advice giver considers profitable or relevant" to the recipient (Vehviläinen, 2012:32; see also Haverkate, 1984). Thus, there is a presupposed problem (Angouri, 2012), and the instrumental purpose of giving advice is to trigger an action (Schmidt and Richards, 1980) or a promise of a future action from the hearer (Searle, 1969). Hyland and Hyland (2012: 53) have suggested that advice "is generally only ever given by those who feel they know what is best for the recipient". Importantly, their observation does not assume personal knowledge or contact between speaker and hearer. This means that when we judge whether an expression constitutes advice or not, we are in part judging whether the (future) action can be seen as beneficial or not (Rintell, 1979; Edmondson and House, 1981; Banerjee and Carrell, 1988; Trosborg, 1995; Flor, 2005).

At the macro-level, advice is considered a type of speech event (Kouper, 2010) or an activity type (Culpeper, Crawshaw, and Harrison, 2008); that is, we distinguish between the advice itself and the act of advising, or advice-giving, which is a complex type of interaction (c.f. Drescher, 2012). Specifically, Angouri (2012:123) has offered a working definition for peer advice in academic talk on essay and dissertation writing: "a discursive phenomenon co-constructed by an advisor and an advisee where the advisor's open agenda is to assist the advisee in meeting his or her needs, desires and expectations [and] in order for the advice to be enacted both parties need to

understand an utterance as having an advice giving function". The act of advice-giving is typically sequential (Heritage and Sefi, 1992; Pudlinski, 2012).

According to Locher (2006), most studies are conversation analyses, focusing on institutional face-to-face encounters. Whatever the communication, it is important to establish a relationship between speaker/writer and hearer/reader (Hyland, 2005). Depending on how writers cognitively position themselves in relation to putative readers, writers of weather texts may give advice as an expert, a reporter, a colleague, or a friend. Such interpersonal relations are realized in texts through the use of interpersonal linguistic resources such as vocatives, modality, and appraisal words (e.g. Halliday and Matthiessen, 2004). However, both the use and interpretation of the interpersonal linguistic resources need strategies to make communications successful. Choices of advice-giving strategies may be greatly affected by advice-givers' perceptions of social status (Matsumura, 2001). Failure to correctly use the strategies on the writer's part and failure to correctly perceive and interpret the strategies on the reader's part both can cause serious failures in communication (Banerjee and Carrel, 1988; Borderia-Garcia, 2006).

In the context of educational feedback on dissertations or essays, Waring (2007, 2012) and Angouri (2012) observed peer interactions. Waring explored the use of explanatory accounts in advice-giving, noting in particular how accounts can be present in several sequential positions. Angouri, on the other, depicted how even peer-advisors enact an expert or senior advisory role in non-formal interactions. Hyland and Hyland (2012) studied advice-giving in teacher written feedback on ESL academic writing. In particular, they looked at the interpersonal role, the forms and patterns of teacher feedback as advice, and students' response and interpretation of the advice. The study revealed a mismatch of expectations between teacher and student. Culpeper, Crawshaw, and Harrison (2008) found that while mentors in general seem to value optionality and solidarity-enhancing talk over directive and authoritative discourse in their interactions with foreign language assistants, mentors in France favoured solidarity-enhancing discourse, coupled with a directive style, to a greater extent compared to those in England. Similarly, through the linguistic analyses of vignettes, DeCapua and Dunham (2012) examined the types of advice-giving and the relational strategies employed by students preparing to be teachers of young children. They concluded that the type and frequency of components of advice-giving vary according to topic, that the components interact with each other to set the tone of advice, and that relational strategies work to mitigate the threatening force of advice-giving, promote bonding and good relationships between the advice-giver and seeker. Both Angouri (2012) and Vehviläinen (2012) have focussed on 'problem-solving' interactions featuring direct questions. Vehviläinen found that Finnish supervisors use question-answer sequences (i.e. question preface) to allow the student's knowledge and perspective to surface; insight that in turn can be used to tailor the advice, and thus minimise the likelihood of the advice falling on deaf ears.

In health-related or medical contexts, Heritage and Sefi (1992) and Heritage and Lindström (2012) observed home visits with first-time mothers. Heritage and Sefi observed that mother-initiated advice is infrequent and could be in the form of straightforward question-answer sequences or in a more cautious and indirect way by describing a state of affairs as problematic. Advice-giving initiated by health visitors, on the other hand, occur much more frequently and often in a stepwise way. Interestingly, Tully, Hassell and Noyce (1997) found that consumers and pharmacists

have different ideas concerning who needs advice and when and how advice should be given. Zayts and Schnurr (2012) studied how medical providers interactionally manage the tension between giving advice and ensuring patient autonomy, typically by framing their responses as giving information rather than giving advice. They are also more direct when patients' advice-seeking is framed as questions around other aspects than the medical decision. Based on their research of two Internet advice columns on sexual health, Harvey, Locher and Mullany (2013) claimed that advice-giving is a delicate act to carry out because of "inescapable messages of authority, expertise and intimacy in advice" (DeCapua and Huber, 1995:128) and is thus generally considered to be face-threatening in Anglo-western contexts (Goldsmith and MacGeorge, 2000; Vine, 2004). Therefore, they proposed the importance for advice-givers to think about linguistic strategies to mitigate the threatening force of advice-giving. Harrison and Barlow (2009) showed that the face-threatening aspects of advice-giving can be successfully addressed in peer-to-peer advice-giving through indirect strategies, such as indirect suggestions framed as declaratives or rhetorical questions. This study, which focused on online self-management for people with arthritis, made a special note of the use of personal narratives, which serve both as an indirect strategy for giving advice, and a positive politeness strategy demonstrating shared concerns and experiences.

Advice-giving in call-in radio advice programmes is commonly framed by mitigation strategies; for example, hosts tend to avoid direct language forms by adopting the same terms as clients when describing a third party's advice (Hudson 1990; Pudlinski 2005). They also use hedges (e.g. *maybe*) and the imperative, when inquiring about a further more specific safe course of action, and refer to an expert when clients implicitly seek advice. DeCapua and Dunham (1993) revealed that hosts prefer to use explanations, elaborations and narrations to help clients' advice-seeking. Going further, Pudlinski (2012) described how hosts can pursue advice that is initially rejected by the caller. He identified three sequential and functional strategies: interrogating for information about the caller's own experiences, supporting the advice with additional accounts, and expressing concern or worry to further extend advice pursuit. Drescher (2012) identified some cultural differences after comparing patterns of advice-giving in phone-in programs in French and Cameroonian cultures, while Emmison and Firth (2012) concluded that the delivery of advice is often constrained by particular institutional practices. In an investigation of online Spanish peer-to-peer advice-giving, Placencia (2012) identified Guidance as the core move. In her study of advice letters on the internet, Locher (2006) noticed an overall preference for hedging as a face-saving strategy. Morrow (2006) analysed online British texts and uncovered an informal style of advice-giving, expressing positive regard and solidarity. Following this study up, Morrow (2012) turned to Japanese advice-giving on the internet. He observed that generally advice is framed in polite question forms and that advice-givers often take an empathetic stance by recounting their own experiences and using first person plural volitional forms.

There have been a number of studies on forms and strategies of advice-giving in Chinese, though none in the context of weather. Wu (2008) posited that advice-giving strategies are determined by power, reflecting the power relation between the advice-giver and the advice-receiver, while Fang (2005) found that the advice-giving forms or strategies students use vary with power and social distance, as well as solidarity. Comparing advice-giving in Chinese and English, Lu (2014) discovered that Chinese speakers think about the social power relationship much more than English speakers. Yan (2011) revealed that most advice-giving speech acts in forum

response posts on the issue of love on the internet are direct and are framed in the form of imperatives (see Li, 2009 for a historical account of syntactic, semantic and pragmatic forms of advice-giving). Similarly to Waring (2007, 2012), Ren (2013) found that adviser-initiated advice is enacted in a typical sequence: pre-advising (i.e. making comments, inquiring, etc.), advising, and post-advising (i.e. providing explanations). The pre- and post-advising act to build an appropriate environment for the act of advising and enable the advising act to be performed successfully.

1.3 Aims

To our knowledge, there are no previous studies of advice-giving in newspaper weather commentaries, nor of whether the discourse differs depending on the newspaper source and/or on the weather being reported. This study aims to fill this gap, thus offering new insights into how newspapers can give effective instructions or advice. To this end, we investigated advice-giving in two Chinese metropolitan newspapers, and sought to answer the following research questions:

- Are there differences in degree of advice-giving between different newspapers (i.e. does one newspaper provide more advice), and is advice-giving linked to the type of weather?
- How is advice-giving distributed in the weather commentaries? Is it sequential? Is the distribution governed by weather and choice of newspaper?
- What are the themes of advice-giving?
- What is the typical mood choice for advice-giving? Is the choice of mood dependent on newspaper source and weather conditions?
- How are interpersonal relationships displayed in advice-giving through the use of addressing terms, such as *shìmín* and *péngyǒu*?

2. Methods

2.1 Corpus

Two Beijing local metropolitan newspapers were chosen for this study: *Beijing Morning Post* (BMP) and *Beijing Evening News* (BEN). These are consistently ranked among the top most widely circulated metropolitan newspapers in Beijing, according to Soubao, a national newspaper website that displays information about top national and local newspapers, including the distribution ranking list (Soubao, 2012, 2013). BMP sells about 340,000-500,000 copies per day (Baidu Encyclopedia, 2014a) and BEN distributes some 1,000,000-1,200,000 copies per day (Baidu Encyclopedia, 2014b). The e-versions of these newspapers are accessible online and are identical to their counterpart hardcopies.

Moreover, both newspapers have half or sometimes even an entire page dedicated to weather forecast information, which includes coloured maps, fact tables and weather indices, as well as special commentaries. The content of the commentaries not only cover basic weather information about the temperature, the sunshine and the wind, but also include comments and advice based on analysis of weather tendencies, meteorological knowledge and Traditional Chinese Medicine (TCM).

We selected weather commentaries published between 22 March 2012 and 28 February 2013. The number of words in each text ranged between 447-629 words in BMP and 303-1127 words in BEN. Altogether 80 texts were chosen (see Appendix),

40 from each newspaper. Of these 40 selected commentaries, 20 texts were about ordinary weather, i.e. the kind of weather that would usually be expected during the month and season in question, and the other 20 texts were from days featuring extreme weather events.

For ordinary weather, all texts were exactly matched for publication date. However, since some of the extreme events occurred on a weekend when BEN does not publish weather commentaries, some of the extreme weather texts were from different dates (see Appendix). The corpus covered the extreme weather events that happened from 20th March 2012 to 19th March 2013, namely two strong winds which were reported to have caused serious damage to public facilities and properties, a flood that killed 79 people (Wang K. et al., 2013), an abnormally early snow storm (Wang D. et al., 2013), as well as the unprecedented severe smogs in January 2013 (Wang Z. et al., 2014).

2.2 Examples of weather commentary texts and advice-giving

The following are typical examples of weather commentaries from the two newspapers. After each example, we will briefly outline the contents and structure of the text, as well as highlight examples of advice-giving.

Example 1 (from BMP)

Běijīng rùqiū le. Qīshí cóng gǎnshòu shàng, shìmín péngyǒu zǎo jiù juéde yǐ rùqiū, liánrì qiūliáng, qìxiàng shùjù yě gěichū míngquè de jīnnián rùqiū shíjiān. Rúgǒu àn lǎo biāozhǔn, jīngchéng jīnnián shì zài 9 yuè 14 rì yě jiùshì shàng zhōurì rù de qiū; Rúgǒu àn xīn biāozhǔn, hái dé tíqián liángtiān, shàng zhōuwǔ jiù yǐ rùqiū. Zuótiān, nánjiāo guānxiàngtái zuìdī qìwēn yǐjīng diēdào 12.1°C, méntóugōu de zuìdī qìwēn dīdào 6°C. Sèsè qiūyì, lǒngzhào jīngchéng. Běijīng jīnnián de rùqiū shíjiān rúgǒu àn xīn biāozhǔn jìsuàn, bǐjiào “zhǔn diǎn”; Rúgǒu àn lǎo biāozhǔn, zé bǐ chángnián rùqiū de 9 yuè 5 rì wǎn le 9 tiān. hé běijīng xiéshǒu zuòbàn, běifāng dàbù dìqū dōu yǐjīng jìnrù qiūtiān.

*Jīntiān báitiān duōyún zhuǎnyīn, xībù hé běibù yǒu léizhènyǔ, zuìgāo qìwēn suǐrán yǒu 25°C, dàn zǎowǎn hái shì liángyì shízú. Háiyào zhùyì jīntiān píngyuán dìqū yǒu qīngwù, néngjiàndù bùjiǎ, **jiàchè yào màn xíng.***

*Shuāngxiū rì tiānqì zhēnxīn bùcuò, jībēn dōushì qíngtiān, zuìgāo qìwēn zài 26°C-27°C, **shìyí wàichū yóuwán.** Xiàzhōu qī, tiān yòu huì yīnchén qīlái, kěnéng hái yǒu zhènyǔ, zài zhōu'èr xílái, báitiān qìwēn yě hái huì zuòhuátīdào jīnyǒu 21°C, jiàngwēn míngxiǎn. **qiūtiān zài běijīng shì hēnduǎn de, shìmín péngyǒu kěyào zhuājīn shíjiān xiǎngshòu chūqiū měijīng, yīnwéi bù xiǎoxīn, yándōng jiù yào kuàimǎjiābiān de láile.***

*Tiānqì liángle, qiūbiāo yě tiē le, yǒuxiē péngyǒu fāxiàn hǎoxiàng “tiē”guò le tóu, **zhèzhǒng shíhòu, bùfáng xuǎnzé dànmàichá, mùguā, hóngshǔ, luóbu, shānzhā děng shíwù lái bāngmáng qīnglǐ chángwèi.***

[Word-by-word rendering: Beijing has entered autumn. Actually from feeling, citizen friends have earlier already felt it has entered autumn. Consecutive days autumn cold, meteorological data also give definite this year entry autumn time. If according to the previous standard, the city of Beijing this year is on 9th month 14th day i.e. last Sunday entered autumn; If according to the new standard, should be advance two days, last Friday entered autumn. Yesterday dawn, Nanjiao Observatory lowest temperature already dropped to 12.1°C, Mentougou lowest temperature dropped to 6°C. Cold autumn feeling, cover the city of Beijing. Beijing this year autumn entry time

according to the new standard relatively “punctual”; according to the previous standard is than usual year’s entry time 9th month 5th day late 9 days. With Beijing hand-in-hand accompany, northern large areas all already entered autumn.

Today the day cloudy turn to overcast, west and north have thunder shower, the highest temperature although is 25°C, but morning evening still cold enough. Also pay attention today morning the plain area has light fog, visibility is not good, **drive slowly**.

Two-day weekend day really not bad, basically all sunny days, the highest 26°C-27°C, **suitable outing for fun**. From next week, sky again overcast, maybe has shower attack Tuesday, the day temperature also sit on slide drop to only 21°C, drop temperature obvious. Autumn in Beijing is very short, **citizen friends should seize time enjoy early autumn beautiful views, because if not careful, cold winter will speedy horse strengthen whips arrive**.

Weather cold, autumn fat has affixed, some friends find seem to have over-affixed fat, **this time, had better choose barley tea, papaya, sweet potato, raddish, or hawthorn to help clear stomach.**]

[English Translation: Beijing has entered the season of autumn. Actually, [My fellow] citizen friends must have already felt the arrival of autumn from the cool air in recent days. Also, the meteorological data [of these days] has actually predicted the definite arrival date of this autumn: 14th September, i.e. last Sunday, if according to the previous standard; last Friday, if based on the new standard. At dawn yesterday, the temperature at Nanjiao Observatory dropped to 12.1 °C, with the lowest reaching 6 °C at Zhaitang in Mentougou District. The autumn cool filled the city of Beijing. Autumn arrived in Beijing relatively on time this year according to the new standard, but it was 9 days late if compared to the usual arrival date, i.e. 5th September. Like Beijing, the majority of other northern areas [of China] have seen autumn, too.

During the day today, it is going to be cloudy and then overcast later. A thunder shower will be expected in the west and in the north. Although the highest is going to be 25 °C, it is chilly early in the morning and late in the evening. In addition, it is going to be a little foggy in the plain areas and the visibility will be low. **Drive slowly**.

This weekend will have two beautiful sunny days, with the highest ranging 26 °C - 27 °C, and **it is fit for a day out**. From next week, it will be overcast. Possibly there will be a shower on next Tuesday and the temperature will drop to 21 °C. Autumn is short in Beijing. **[My fellow] citizen friends had better take time to enjoy the early beautiful autumn, as the cold winter will arrive very soon**.

With the days getting cool, we have gained some weight. However, some friends may find themselves to have become overweight. **In this case, it would be good to take some barley tea, papaya, sweet potato, radish, or hawthorn to help clear the stomach.**]

(BMP, 19th September 2014)

This BMP text starts with an overview of recent weather tendencies, focussing on autumn in Beijing and its similarity to previous years. There is also a review of the previous day’s weather and in the recent days. The next part is the forecast, i.e. the weather prediction for today. Before moving on with a second forecast that predicts the weather over the weekend, the writer includes the advice: “Drive slowly”. This advice is brought on by the forecasted fog and low visibility. There is further advice given after the weekend forecast, namely to enjoy the autumn as winter is coming, as well as the more implied advice: “it is fit for a day out”. The final section is the ending (i.e. independent additional advice), which details dietary advice for readers who have gained too much weight.

In sum, the sequence of components in this text is: 1) overview, 2) review, 3) overview, 4) forecast, 5) forecast, and 6) ending. Noticeably, the two overviews and the review are interwoven and recursive, making it hard to separate these components. We count four instances of advice-giving in this example that occur in the two forecasts and in the ending.

Example 2 (from BEN)

Jìntiān yínglái le guóqìng jiàqī yǐlái zuìwéi míngmèi de yītiān. Yǐ dàzǎo, tàiyáng gōnggōng zhēng dāng láomó, zǎozǎo de shànggǎng. Guóqìng wéibashàng de fēnghérìlì, gěi chángjià lái le gè wánměi shōugōng.

*Yángguāng suíhǎo, zǎoshàng de qìwēn kě bùgāo. Gēnjù Běijīng qìxiàngjú xiāoxi, jìntiān zǎoshàng nánjiāo guānxiàngtái zuìdī qìwēn 6.4°C, chéngqū dàbùfēn dìqū de qìwēn 5°C -8°C, jiāoqū zé gèngdī, tèbié shì běibù dìqū, bùshǎo dìfāng jiàngdào le 0°C xià. Suízhe yángguāng zhújiān fāwēi, dào le wǔhòu, jīngchéng de zuìgāo qìwēn kěyǐ shēngdào 20°C yǐshàng. **Cǐwài, jìntiān de néng jiàndù hé kōngqì zhǐliàng yě hěn zhēngqì, fēicháng shìhé rénmen chūxíng.***

Míngmèi de qīguāng zài míngtiān háijiāng chíxù wéichí. bùguò, chángjià guòhòu, jīngchéng shàngkōng de yúncéng jiāng zhújiān jiāhòu. Yīncǐ, zài jiéhòu shàngbān dìyītiān, běnshì jiāng zhuǎnwéi duōyún tiānqì, suíhòu jìtiān, lǎotiānyé de xīnqíng yě bù tàihǎo, liǎnsè yīnchén, tiānqì yǐduōyún hé yīntiān wéizhǔ, zuìgāo qìwēn zài 19°C-23°C zhījiān. Dào le zhōurì, tiānqì yǒuwàng zhuǎnqíng.

[word-by-word rendering: Today welcome national holiday since the brightest day. Early in the morning, the sun grandpa compete to be the most hardworking, early be on duty. On the National Day holiday tail mild wind beautiful sun, give the holiday a beautiful end.

Sunshine though good, morning's temperature was not high. According to Beijing Meteorological Bureau, today's morning Nanjiao Observatory's the lowest temperature was 6.4°C, most urban areas' temperature was 5°C -8°C, suburb was even lower, especially the northern area, most places dropped to 0°C below. As the sunshine growing stronger, when it is after noon, urban area highest temperature will rise to 20°C above. **In addition, today's visibility and air quality both are good, very suitable for people to go for an outing.**

Bright sunny autumn tomorrow will continue. However, long holiday after, urban area above cloud will gradually grow thicker. Thus, after holiday work first day, this city will be cloudy, following days, the sky will be mainly cloudy and overcast, the highest temperature will be 19°C-23°C. On Sunday, it will hopefully turn sunny.]

[English translation: Today embraces the most beautiful day of the National Day holiday. The sun shines brightly since the very early morning. The gentle breeze and lovely sunshine give the National Day holiday a beautiful conclusion.

Despite the beautiful sunshine, the temperature was not gentle in the early morning. According to the Beijing Meteorological Bureau, the lowest temperature was 6.4°C at Nanjiao Observatory and 5°C -8°C in most other urban areas. The temperature was even lower in the suburbs, especially in the north, even dropping to below 0°C. As the sunshine grows stronger, the highest will rise up to above 20°C. **Adding to this beautiful sunshine, the wonderful visibility and quality of air make it a lovely day out.**

Tomorrow it will continue to be a bright sunny autumn day. However, the clouds will grow thick in the sky over the city. Thus, on the first working day after the holiday, it will be cloudy. Most

of the following days will be mainly cloudy and overcast, with the highest temperature ranging 19°C - 23°C. Hopefully it will turn sunny on Sunday.]
(BEN 6th October 2014)

In this BEN example, the overview of recent weather tendencies is strikingly short, before moving on to reviewing the morning's weather (which is in the past as BEN is usually published at noon and reaches its readers in the early afternoon). Thereafter, a forecast focusing on the weather for the afternoon. Here, implicit advice is offered: "a lovely day out". Finally, a second forecast.

In sum, the sequence in this text is: 1) overview, 2) review, 3) forecast, and 4) forecast. There is only one instance of advice, located with the first forecast.

2.3 Analysis

Hasan's Generic Structure Potential (1984, 1985, 1996) was utilised to categorise the advice themes in the texts and to analyse the structural organisation, where special attention was paid to the frequency and location of advice. The UAM CorpusTool (O'Donnell, 2012) was also used to assist in the statistical annotation of texts.

Based on the assumption that genre is a type of discourse, Hasan investigated the structures of genres, which led to her proposed theory for genre analysis: Generic Structure Potential (GSP). According to Hasan, the GSP of a genre consists of obligatory elements and optional elements, which appear in a linear sequence. The function of optional elements may account for the variations in the texts that belong to the same genre. In this case, a single GSP can generate a large number, or if recursion is involved, an infinite number of actual structures with the variable realization of each element. In other words, a potentially infinite number of actual texts can occur as exemplars of the same genre. Hasan's GSP allows a systemic and consistent description of generic structures of instances of texts in terms of the elements included. Since some elements may be common to different genres, and the more elements two genres share, the more similar they will be.

Weather commentaries seem to be made up of four types of components (or moves): overview (lead-in statements summarising the general weather conditions and tendencies – past and future), review (statements regarding the most recent weather), forecast (predictions of future weather), and ending (independent additional advice). As the two examples in Section 2.2 show, advice-giving can occur in the forecast or the ending, and Example 5 further below illustrates how advice can be incorporated into the overview component of the weather commentaries. Our examples also show that a component can occur more than once in a commentary. As our analysis in Section 3.2 below will show, we found that most of the time the overview and review components are so intertwined that is not always possible to separate them. We therefore merged these two into one component: overview.

Qualitative analysis was carried out in stages. First, the authors agreed an initial coding scheme, before the second author, who is a native speaker of Chinese, coded all the data independently and proposed a revised coding scheme based on the finding of four advice components. Next, the second author translated examples of commentaries for the first author to code. The authors discussed differences and similarities in coding practice, and further examples were translated verbally and scrutinised. Thereafter, the coding scheme and a multitude of examples were presented to discourse analysts fluent in Chinese, and feedback was received.

Finally, the final coding scheme was agreed, and all the data was re-coded by the second author and jointly agreed with the first author.

Quantitative analysis was carried out with the use of SPSS 19. Analysis was predominantly descriptive. Since the total number of words in each article of BEN varied considerably, all word counts were normalised by a 500-word factor to make the data comparable and meaningful (Rundblad, 2007). Thus, all counts presented in this paper are normalised counts. Where the distribution of a particular linguistic feature was normal, we used a univariate ANOVA to determine whether the use of that feature was dependent on the newspaper source and/or on the type of weather.

3. Findings and Discussions

3.1 Degree of advice-giving

The annotation of the texts (Table 1) revealed that both newspapers tended to offer more advice for extreme weather than for ordinary weather and that during ordinary weather, BMP, in particular, gave comparatively little advice. A univariate ANOVA confirmed that while newspaper source had no effect independently or in an interaction (newspaper*weather), the type of weather did significantly predict higher advice-giving for extreme weather ($F_{(1,76)}=11.413$; $p<0.01$).

Table 1. Degree of advice-giving for ordinary and extreme weather in BMP and BEN

	Ordinary weather			Extreme weather		
	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD
BMP	46.64	2.33	1.41	80.91	4.05	2.23
BEN	62.17	3.11	1.58	86.08	4.30	2.32

Advice-giving is a general strategy used in weather commentaries to interact with and attract readers. According to an online investigation conducted by China Weather Web (2011) among 3589 people in Beijing, up to 45% of those surveyed pay close attention to the effect of weather on general health and certain diseases; 25% care about weather for travel and outdoor activities; 25% are concerned with weather information for proper (thick or thin) clothing. Thus, the Chinese public very much welcome experts' instructions on how to cope with and prepare for different types of weather. During extreme events, we can presume an even greater awareness (for both the author and the reader) of the link between weather and well-being and the effect that can have on human daily life and social activities.

The significant increase in the number of advice instances during extreme weather events in both BMP and BEN demonstrates the importance both newspapers attach to weather-based advice-giving in emergencies. In China, it is very common that the general public do not have sufficient knowledge as to how to cope with extreme weather events. For instance, during the disastrous flood on 21 July 2012, which was the worst flood in over 60 years, many of those who were caught in the heavy rain panicked because they had never experienced such a big flood before (Wang K. et al., 2013). In addition, the rescue system collapsed. As a result, 79 people in total died in the flood, including a driver who was drowned because he stayed in his car and was subsequently unable to escape, as well as two young university students who chose to swim across a flooded bridge. It is possible

that if they had benefitted from professional instructions or advice before the event, they might have stood a better chance at survival. It is quite likely that events such as this one have (or will) gear the Chinese newspapers to offer more substantial weather-based advice during extreme events in the short-term and climate change in the long-term.

3.2. Distribution of advice-giving across components

Analysis revealed an uneven distribution of advice-giving (Table 2). The first possible place for advice-giving was in the overview. The overviews focussed typically on recent weather conditions, and/or typical weather tendencies for this season. Thus, the overview included statements about what we should expect in the next few days based on seasonal information, which is different to the forecast. The overview also functioned as an introduction to the rest of the commentary, and the advice found in this component was often more generic, being based on seasonal patterns (See Example 5 below). Not surprisingly, only a few instances of advice-giving were found in the overview component.

Table 2. Distribution of advice-giving across components

	BMP				BEN			
	Ordinary weather		Extreme weather		Ordinary weather		Extreme weather	
	n	%	n	%	n	%	n	%
overview	1.80	3.79	9.18	11.37	3.94	6.06	8.19	9.51
forecast	39.87	83.86	53.67	66.44	48.32	74.92	77.81	90.49
ending	5.86	12.35	17.95	22.20	12.24	19.02	0.00	0.00

As the main purpose of the weather commentaries is to predict the weather, it is not surprising to find that the forecast is the most prominent, and compulsory, component in the commentaries. It is also in the forecast that we found the majority of advice and instructions, all related to the future local weather. As illustrated in Example 3, some authors prefer to start the weather commentary with the forecast, especially in the case of extreme weather, and most often with related advice coming directly after.

Example 3

Yánhán tiānqì háizài chíxù, jīntiān shì jīnyīduàn shíjiān lǐ de “dīgǔ”, gèng bànyǒu sìwǔjī běifēng, fēnghán xiàoyìng jiāng chuīde wǒmen biàntǐ shēnghán. jīntiān shì zhōuliù, méiyǒu shénmo tèbié shìqíng de péngyǒu bùfáng xuǎnzé zhái zài jiāzhōng, bù yào chūmén áidòng le.

[Word-by-word rendering: cold weather still is continuing, today is recent time “low valley”, also accompanied by 4 or 5 force scale north wind, wind cold effect will blow us all over grow cold. Today is Saturday, **not have what special business friend had better choose stay at home, don’t go out to suffer being frozen.**]

[English Translation: The freezing weather continues and the temperature today is going to reach the “bottom” of recent times with the strong north wind of 4 or 5 force scale. The biting cold will make us feel freezing all over. Today is Saturday. **Those friends who have no special business to attend to had better stay at home. Don’t go out to suffer the piercing cold.**]

(BMP, 8 December 2012)

As illustrated in Figure 1, the mean number of instances of advice in the forecasts was noticeably higher in BEN during extreme weather ($M=3.89$). When querying whether newspaper source and/or the type of weather impacted inclusion of advice here, we found that both factors impacted usage (weather: $F_{(1,76)}=9.024$; $p<0.01$; newspaper: $F_{(1,76)}=4.268$; $p<0.05$). No interaction was found. In other words, BEN used more advice in its forecasts, regardless of the type of weather, and during extreme weather events both newspapers increased their advice-giving significantly.

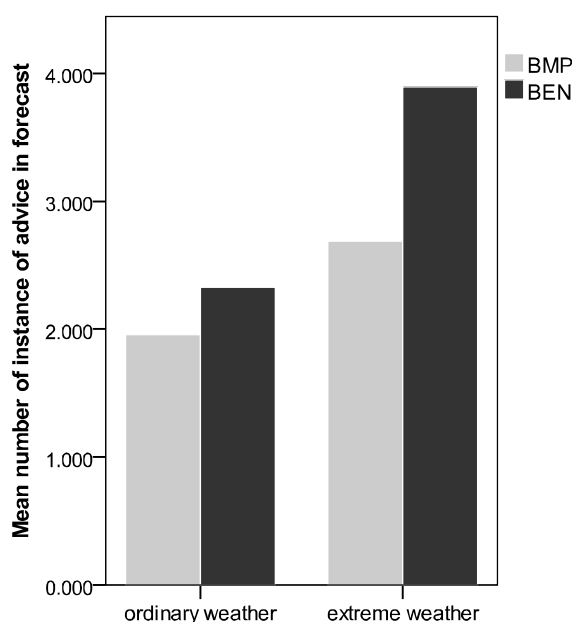


Figure 1. The mean frequency of advice in forecast

The sharp increase we saw earlier for commentaries as a whole during extreme weather events was probably linked to the rise in advice in the forecast component of the commentaries. With regards to BEN, it is now clear that this newspaper generally featured greater degrees of advice in the forecasts. This might be due to the self-positioning of BEN writers. BEN writers seemed to portray themselves as experts or authorities who are supposed to possess more meteorological knowledge – which was typically found in the forecast component - than ordinary people, and who are responsible for offering relevant advice to lay people.

Another popular place for advice-giving was the ending. The popular topics here were a healthy diet, health care and disease prevention during the specific season in question. The advice in the ending was more independent from its adjacent prior weather content. Example 4 illustrates two instances of ending advice.

Example 4

Zuótiān, nánjiāo guānxiàngtái zuìgāo qìwēn 23.3°C, shìqū qìwēn 24 °C...xiàzhōu jiāng chíxù duǒfēng, yùjì zhōu'èr zhōusān qìwēn jiāng yǒu suǒ xià jiàng.

*Chūntiān tiāngān wùzào, róngyì shànghuǒ. **Yǎngshēng zhuānjiā gěi dàjiā tuījiàn zuìpíngfán de luóbō, chīluóbō néng shùnnqì jiànwèi, qīnggrè xiāotán, zuìhǎo shēngchī, hái kě zuò luóbōtāng hē; cǐwài tuījiàn lián'ǒu hé xīhóngshì.....***

[Word-by-word rendering: Yesterday, Nanjiao Observatory highest temperature 23.3 °C, city area temperature 24°C...next week will continue many winds, predict Tuesday Wednesday temperature will a little drop down.

Spring weather dry things dry, easy catch fire. **Take care health experts give everybody recommendation the most ordinary radish**, eat radish can regulate *qi* protect stomach, clear heat clear sputum, **best raw eat, also may do radish soup drink, also recommend lotus roots and tomatoes...**]

[English Translation: Yesterday, the highest was 23.3°C at Nanjiao Observatory and 24°C in the urban area...It will remain windy next week and the temperature is predicted to drop slightly on Tuesday and Wednesday.

It is dry in spring. The drought makes it likely for heat accumulation inside our body. **Health care experts recommend ubiquitous radish for internal heat reduction**. Radish can help to relieve stagnation, regulate *qi*, strengthen the stomach and clear away the internal heat and sputum. **For the best effect, the radish should be eaten raw or as radish soup. [Health experts] also recommend lotus roots and tomatoes...**]

(BMP, 7 April 2012)

In terms of the distribution of instances of advice in the endings, it is worth noticing that while BMP followed what now seems to be the general weather advice pattern with more advice during extreme events, BEN supplied no advice at all in the endings during extreme weather. This non-use is probably due to advice in the ending usually being relaxing health care suggestions or recommendations that very often are independent from the rest of the commentary (Example 4). Such advice would not serve the serious or emergent tone of advice-giving favoured in BEN, especially not during adverse weather.

In sum, the typical GSP of Chinese weather commentaries could be summarised as: (overview)^forecast^(ending).¹ In this linear structure, the overview and the ending are optional elements; whereas the forecast is obligatory. We discovered that advice often occurs after information related to future weather in each component. Although, we were forced to merge overview and review into one component, it is worth mentioning that we found no instances of advice in this component that related to past weather. Possibly this was because such advice would be useless or that the relevant advice had already been included in the forecast component the day before.

3.3 Advice Themes

The texts in the corpus demonstrated a rich variety of advice in terms of the themes. One major theme for advice content was concerned with the distinctive variety of the local climate as illustrated in Examples 5 and 6.

Example 5

*Dàfēngtiānlǐ...zài hùwài xíngzǒu shí, yào dāngxīn bìng yuǎnlí guǎnggàopái hé huāpén
děng róngyì zhuìluò de wùpǐn, yǐmiǎn bèi dǎfēng wùshāng. Língwài, dǎfēngtiān róngyì
chuíqǐ dìmiàn huīchén, bùfáng dàikǒuzhào...Qìxiàngzhuānjiā tíxǐng: Dàfēngtiān qù jiāowài*

¹ According to Hasan (1985), the GSP of a genre consists of obligatory elements and optional elements that appear in a linear sequence. The symbol ^ is used to for the linear sequence and () for optional elements

yóuwán yào zhùyì fánghuǒ.

[Word-by-word rendering: **Big wind weather...at outdoors walk time, should take care and stay far from advertisements billboards and flower pots, etc. easy fall objects, avoid by big wind being hurt. Also, big wind weather easy blow up earth dust, had better wear masks...Meteorological specialists warn: big wind weather go suburb to play should pay attention to prevent fire.**]

[English Translation: **When walking in a strong wind, please be careful and stay away from unfastened objects, such as billboards or flower pots, to avoid getting injured. Also, it does no harm to wear masks as the wind may blow the dust up from the ground... Meteorological specialists advise watching out for the risks of a fire when having fun [e.g. a picnic] in a farm on a windy day.**]
(BMP, 24 March 2012)

Example 5 was advice for the spring, when frequent blustery winds and drought might lead to advice-giving to guard against the risks of falling objects from high buildings and forest fires. Moreover, Example 6 illustrates that the unreliable temperatures in the spring generated another advice theme about proper dressing to guard against the well-known sharp gaps between the highest and the lowest temperatures.

Example 6

Jīnqī běijīng lěng kōngqì huódòng pínán, guāfēng rìshù duō, qìwēn qífú dà, Shímín péngyǒu yào gēnjù tiānqì biànhuà jíshí zēngjiǎn yīwù, qiānwàn bié zháo liáng.

[Word-by-word rendering: Recent days Beijing cold air move frequent, blow wind days many, weather up and down big, **citizens friends should according to weather change timely add and decrease clothes, must not catch cold.**]

[English Translation: Recently cold air is active and visits the Beijing city frequently. This brings about more windy days and dramatic ups and downs in temperature. **Citizen [my fellow] friends, [you] should be careful with the [unreliable] weather conditions and change your clothing accordingly so as to avoid catching a cold.**]
(BEN, 22 March 2012)

In summer, medical advice is of great importance to those who are susceptible to certain diseases that are liable to occur in this season as shown in Example 7. Instructions concerning self-protection in thunder storms and floods are of extreme value to save life, especially in extreme weather as illustrated by Example 8.

Example 7

Jīntiān “rùfú”... fútiān shì xīnxǔeguǎnbìng duōfā jìjié, yào zuòhǎo fángfàn.

[Word-by-word rendering: today “rùfú”...hot summer days are cardiovascular diseases many happen season, **should be ready prevent.**]

[English Translation: Today is “rùfú”, when the hottest summer days begin...During these days,

cardiovascular diseases are likely to occur. **Preventive measures are necessary.**
(BEN, 8 July 2012)

Example 8

Jīntiān, ...cóng bāngwǎn zhì yèjiān huì chūxiàn dàyǔ rúzhù, bìng dá dào bàoyǔ liàngjí. Qìxiàng zhuān jiā tíxíng dàjiā, jīntiān wǎnjiān bù yào wài chū... bù yào jué dé běijīng bàoyǔ zhèng hǎo chèn zhe zhōumò táolí jīngchéng chūmén yóuwán, shíjìshàng zhècì jiàngyǔ bōjī zhèng gè huáběi dìq....shuāngxīuri dōu huì xià yǔ, yǔliàng jiǎodà, bù yí wàichū.

[Word-by-word rendering: Today, ...from early evening to night will occur big rain like torrent, and reach storm scale. Meteorological specialists advise everybody, **today evening do not out go..... do not think Beijing storm use weekend escape city go out have travel, actually this time rain cover whole North China area... Weekend will rain, rain amount big, not suit out go.**]

[English Translation: Today, it will be raining in torrents from early evening until late at night, and the rain will grow into a storm. Meteorological specialists put forward the following advice to everyone: **do not go out this evening..... do not think of escaping from the storm by leaving the city for fun over the two-day weekend, because the storm will actually cover the whole northern area of China and it will not be suitable for any outdoor activity.**]
(BMP, 21 July 2012)

Example 9 illustrates some possible contents of advice-giving in winter. The freezing cold, the biting wind, the drought or heavy snow render it necessary to warn against risks of CO poisoning due to incorrect coal heating, to provide medical advice against diseases that are liable to recurrences, or to offer instructions about how to drive skilfully on slippery snowy roads.

Example 9

Jiàngxuě dàilái lùmiàn shīhuá, xiǎoxīn jiàshǐ, zhǔdòng jiàngdī xíngshǐ sùdù, lādà chējiānjù, zài zhǔgàndào tōngxíng shí, bù yào cóng yìngjí chēdào chāochē, yù chūrùkǒu jìnkěnéng tíqián cǎiqǔ jiǎnsù cuòshī, bìmiǎn tūrán biànhuàn chēdào huò jíshāchē jiǎnsù de qíngkuàng fāshēng, fángzhǐ zàochéng chēliàng dǎhuá shíkòng huòzhě zhuīwēi shìgù.

[Word-by-word rendering: Snowfall bring road slippery, **Be careful driving, Take initiatives slow down driving speed, lengthen car distance, On the main road, do not from the emergency lane pass car, approaching exits, do best in advance take slowing down measures, avoid abruptly changing lanes and abruptly braking slow down speed situations take place, prevent cause car slip out of control or bump into another car accident.**]

[English Translation: The snow makes the roads slippery. **Be careful while driving. Take initiatives to slow down. Keep your distance with other cars. While driving on the main road, do not use the emergency lane to pass another car. When approaching an exit, do your best to slow down in advance to avoid changing lanes and braking abruptly, which may lead to losing control of the car or bumping into another car on the slippery road.**]
(BEN, 14 January 2013)

Even in autumn, for the most beautiful, sunny, flowery days, advice about mood adjustment is popular as shown in Example 10.

Example 10

Jìntiān qiūfēn, zìgǔ féngqiū bēi jìliáo, yóuqí qiūyǔ liánmián shí, huì ràng rén xīnxù dīluò, chūxiàn bēiliáng de gǎnjué. Suǒyǐ péngyǒumen yào jíshí tiáojié xīnlǐ, qīngsōng lèguān, bù yào zìxún fánǎo, yùfáng bēiqiū.

[Word-by-word rendering: today the autumnal equinox, from ancient times meet autumn sad lonely, especially autumn rain continuous, can make people emotion low drop, occur sad feeling. **So friends should in time adjust emotion, relax optimistic, not yourself look for sorrow, prevent feel sad autumn.**]

[English Translation: Today is the autumnal equinox. When autumn is beginning to approach the end, people tend to feel sad and lonely in autumn as depicted ever since ancient times, especially so on continuous rainy days. **Thus [my dear fellow] friends [, you] need to adjust [your] mood in time. Keep relaxed and optimistic. Do not look for sorrow for yourself. Prevent [yourself] from feeling “autumn sadness”.**] (BMP, 22 September 2012)

Apart from local climates, TCM was found to be another source of inspiration for advice-giving. TCM theorists believe that body functioning, health maintenance and even dietary habits have close connection with various weather conditions and with the seasons or times of the year. Active adaptation to the change of the seasons in terms of life style and diet can help keep fit and prevent diseases. The failure to do so may result in health decline and eventually in diseases. Accordingly, the corpus revealed that health care or dietary habits based on TCM were popular topics in advice-giving as shown in Example 11.

Example 11

Jìntiān “dōngzhì”, qiàféng xiǎoxuě.....zhōngyī rènwéi yǎngshēng yīng yīndìzhìyí. Xuěhòu yīnshèngyángshuāi, hánxiézhòng, zuìyì shāng rén yángqì, yīncǐ yǎngshēng yīng yǐ yǎngjīngxùrui wéizhǔ.....yīng zǎoshuìwǎnqǐ; yīzhuó yīng shìdāng, zhùyì bǎonuǎn.....yóuqí tóu jìng bèi bù, jiǎobù de fánghán yǐ fángzhǐ yángqì shòu dào sǔn shāng.

[Word-by-word rendering: Today “the winter solstice”, happen to be small snow.....**Traditional Chinese Medicine think take care of health should according to place time suit.** Snow after *yīn* rise *yang* drop, cold heavy, most easily damage people’s *yángqì*, **so health care should mainly care spirit.....should go to bed early get up late; clothing suitable, pay attention to keep warm.....especially head neck back and feet prevent cold to prevent *yángqì* being damaged.**]

[English Translation: Today is the winter solstice, which has arrived accidentally with a light snow.....**According to Traditional Chinese Medicine, health should be taken care of according to the reality of the time and place.** After a snow, *yīn* is high and *yáng* is low in the human body, and *yáng* could be damaged by the heavy cold caused by the snow. **Accordingly healthcare should focus on how to conserve strength and store up energy..... [You]**

should go to bed early and sleep late; [you] need to dress in warm clothes..... Particularly, keep [your] head, back neck and feet warm, so as to prevent [your] *yáng* from being harmed.]

(BEN, 21 December 2012)

To sum up, the climate and TCM contributed to the abundant contents of advice. The topics of advice ranged from clothing, driving, hiking, suncreening and outdoor activities, to precautions against bad weather, warnings of potential risks, instructions for prevention of certain diseases caused by certain types of weather, and tips on health care or diet according to different times of seasons in a year.

3.4 Use of imperatives

Imperatives were found to be a very popular mood choice in general. As Table 3 highlights, the writers in both newspapers tended to use more imperatives to give advice during extreme weather conditions than on ordinary weather days. A univariate ANOVA supports this observation (weather: $F_{(1,76)}=9.847$; $p<0.01$). We did not find a significant effect for newspaper, nor an interaction between the two factors.

Table 3. Use of imperatives in advice-giving

	Ordinary weather			Extreme weather		
	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD
BMP	33.59	1.68	1.22	48.90	2.44	1.82
BEN	38.30	1.92	1.20	65.70	3.28	1.74

The usage of imperatives on days of extreme weather might be linked to the writers' self-positioning in relation to putative readers. High usage implies that the writers were consciously or unconsciously considering themselves in a superior position in terms of professional expertise. As illustrated by Advice 1-5 in Example 9, the commentators present themselves as weather forecast experts or authorities on weather who have much more professional knowledge compared to the reader. Thus, the writers tend to use imperatives to offer direct advice, especially in the case of extreme weather, to make the advice sound more authoritative, more reliable and especially more urgent. This leaves the impression that the addressee has no other option but to follow the advice for the sake of the addressee's own benefit or safety.

3.5 *Shímín* (citizen) and *péngyǒu* (friend) as addressing terms

Another important linguistic pattern was the mixed use of the high-status vocative *shímín* and the equal-status vocative *péngyǒu* (Table 4). It should be noted that, technically, these two terms are not mutually exclusive; in fact, several instances of combined use was found in the corpus.

Table 4. Use of *shímín* (citizen) and *péngyǒu* (friend) as addressing terms

	BMP						BEN					
	Ordinary weather			Extreme weather			Ordinary weather			Extreme weather		
	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD	n	mean	SD
<i>shímín</i>	1.96	0.10	0.30	2.85	0.14	0.35	3.50	0.17	0.44	15.33	0.77	0.80
<i>péngyǒu</i>	6.65	0.33	0.47	6.03	0.30	0.50	2.27	0.11	0.35	2.51	0.13	0.31

As shown in Example 12, *shímín* indicates that the writer had a higher social status or more power than the reader. By addressing the reader with *shímín*, the writer was above all positioning himself as an expert or authority on weather, for the purpose of making the advice-giving more authoritative or reliable so that the audience would feel secure or confident to follow the advice.

Example 12

Míngtiān báitiān.....píngjūn fēnglì dá wǔliù jí.....duì hùwài huódòng jí jiāotōng chūxíng dōuyǒu bùlì yǐngxiǎng. Shímín wàichū qián yīng guānhǎo ménchuāng; fēngdàshí bùyào zài wéibǎn, péngjià, guǎnggàopái děng róngyì bèi fēng chuīdòng de dājiàn wù fùjìn dòulíu.

[Word-by-word rendering: Tomorrow daytime,.....average wind force reach 5 to 6 force scale.....for outdoor activities and traffic going out all have no good effects. **Citizens go out before should securely close doors and windows; wind big time do not hoardings, scaffoldings and billboards etc. easily wind blown movable constructions near stay.**]

[English Translation: During the daytime tomorrow, the wind can reach about 5 to 6 force scale. This will affect outdoor activities and traffic. **Before leaving home, [my fellow] citizens should fasten tight all windows and doors; when in strong winds, do not stay near those building constructions that are easily blown movable by a strong wind, such as hoardings, scaffoldings and billboards.**]

(BEN, 29 March 2012)

In terms of usage (Table 4), *shímín* was particularly favoured by BEN, and again we can see an increase in use for extreme weather. This means that there was a greater tendency for the weather commentators from BEN to make themselves sound more authoritative, and with it, the advice they gave.

Unlike *shímín*, the use of *péngyǒu* (pl. *péngyǒumen*=friends) indicates an equal relationship, i.e. equal social status, power or authority (Example 13). As friendship means equality, trust, and intimacy, the use of this term creates the feeling of closeness or intimacy between the writer and the reader, which might definitely have a positive effect on the reader's willingness to accept and act upon the advice.

Example 13

Jīnchén zuìdī qìwēn jǐnyǒu 5℃, hé báitiān zuìgāo qìwēn chā 15℃, péngyǒumen bùfáng zǎowǎn tiānyī, báitiān jiǎnyī.....Qìwēn fǎnfù de shíjié, bǎojiānzhuānjiā tíxǐng péngyǒumen yào jǐngtì hūxìtǒng jībìng, xīnxuèguǎnbìng hé fēngshīlèjībìng fùfā.

[Word-by-word rendering: today morning lowest temperature only 5℃, daytime highest temperature gap 15℃, **friends had better morning evening add clothes, daytime reduce clothes..... temperature unreliable season, and health care specialists remind friends should be alert respiratory, cardiovascular and rheumatism diseases repeat.**]

[English Translation: The lowest temperature early this morning was only 5°C. There is a difference of 15°C between the highest and the lowest today. **It does no harm to [my] friends to put on more clothing early in the morning and late in the afternoon but wear less during the day.....Health care specialists advise [my] friends to note that respiratory,**

cardiovascular and rheumatism diseases are liable to re-occur in such a season of changeable temperatures.]

(BMP, 27 March 2012)

Complementing our results for *shímín*, we found for *péngyǒu* that BMP shows a greater preference (Table 4). Interestingly, this usage pattern was not affected by whether the commentary was reporting on ordinary weather or an extreme weather event. This may indicate that BMP writers defined themselves in an equal position to their readers, which logically should not change depending on the weather. Alternatively, they might make a conscious choice to keep the writer-reader status equal during extreme weather in the hope that “friendly” advice is more palatable, ensuring greater compliance with the advice.

4. Conclusions

de Beaugrande (1997) has claimed that weather report texts have low informativity. Therefore, advice-giving in such texts should, by extension, be even more limited in content, as it is just a minor part of this genre. This study sought to address differences and similarities in advice-giving and advice themes between two different Beijing newspapers, and in particular asked whether the type of weather commented on affected the degree of advice-giving. Our results reveal that weather related advice-giving was abundant, especially during extreme events. In terms of content, the variety of climate facts and the vast reservoir of medical theories on health contributed to a large number of advice themes in the weather commentaries: from ordinary weather to extreme weather, from daily activities to special occasions, from everyday health care to prevention of seasonal diseases. Thus contrary to de Beaugrande’s presumption, Chinese weather forecast texts are highly informative, with the quantity and quality of weather-related advice varying reliably and appropriately in accordance with the present weather.

A second objective for the present investigation was to determine the distribution of advice-giving across the three structural components of weather commentaries, and whether the type of weather affected this. While many of the weather commentaries also contained an overview and an ending, it is the forecast section in the middle that dominates. This confirms that the main communicative purpose of these commentaries is to forecast the immediate future weather as well as to comment on the “weather tendency” of recent days. But this study also shows the prominent role that advice-giving featured here; in fact, the aforementioned increase in advice during extreme events could be traced to the forecast component. In addition, *Beijing Evening News* consistently featured more advice in their forecasts.

Finally, uses of imperatives and vocatives were investigated in order to determine how the journalists positioned themselves in relation to their audience. During extreme events, the number of imperatives used by both newspapers increased significantly. This usage pattern suggests that during times where potentially life-saving advice was communicated, the journalists sought to establish themselves as experts, thus further stressing the relevance of the advice in their commentary. For *Beijing Evening News*, we found a similar pattern for the high-status vocative *shímín*, where again the journalists utilised this linguistic device to display authority more during extreme events. *Beijing Morning Post*, on the other hand, showed a clear

preference for the equal-status addressing term *péngyǒu* regardless of the type of weather. While appropriate use of high-status addressing terms can increase the feeling of authority or reliability of advice, the use of equal-status addressing term can add credit to the intimate writer-reader relationship. This could, in turn, increase the acceptability of potentially face-threatening advice.

Combining our findings for these addressing terms, we conclude that writers, who were prone to take an authoritative stance when giving advice to their readers, did so to an even greater extent during extreme weather; whereas writers who position themselves “with” their readers, used more imperatives but did not change their vocative preferences. Since the purpose behind advice-giving tends to be to urge compliance with the advice, we can assume that the different writers have deliberately chosen to pursue compliance by these different means. It is very possible that the writer’s self-positioning to the putative readers affects the willingness and likelihood to comply with the advice. Future studies should attempt to investigate the extent to which readers’ compliance with advice is determined by the use of vocatives and imperatives.

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DRAFT

Appendix

Corpus of weather commentaries

Ordinary Weather	Extreme	Weather
BMP /BEN	BMP	BEN
22 Mar 2012	20 Jul 2012,flood	29 Mar 2012,wind
23 Mar 2012	21 Jul 2012,flood	20 Jul 2012,flood
26 Mar 2012	22 Jul 2012,flood	23 Jul 2012,flood
27 Mar 2012	23 Jul 2012,flood	24 Jul 2012,flood
28 Mar 2012	24 Jul 2012,flood	25 Jul 2012,flood
05 Apr 2012	25 Jul 2012,flood	27 Jul 2012,flood
06 Apr 2012	27 Jul 2012,flood	28 Jul 2012,flood
10 Apr 2012	28 Jul 2012,flood	29 Jul 2012,flood
11 Apr 2012	29 Jul 2012,flood	02 Nov 2012,snow
12 Apr 2012	20 Oct 2012,wind	05 Nov 2012,snow
13 Apr 2012	21 Oct 2012,wind	10 Dec 2012,smog
17 Apr 2012	11 Nov 2012,smog	14 Dec 2012,smog
23 Apr 2012	08 Dec 2012,smog	15 Dec 2012,smog
24 Apr 2012	10 Dec 2012,smog	13 Jan 2013,smog
25 Apr 2012	11 Jan 2013,smog	14 Jan 2013,smog
26 Apr 2012	12 Jan 2013,smog	18 Jan 2013,smog
31Aug 2012	13 Jan 2013,smog	21 Jan 2013,smog
03 Sep 2012	14 Jan 2013,smog	22 Jan 2013,smog
04 Sep 2012	18 Jan 2013,smog	27 Feb 2013,wind
05 Sept 2012	22 Jan 2013,smog	28 Feb 2013,wind